



**File Code:** 1920-2-5

**Date:** July 24, 2007

Dear Kaibab Forest Users:

I would like to update you on the Kaibab National Forest Plan Revision process and upcoming activities.

In late March, the Forest Service was enjoined from using the 2005 Planning Rule for revising our Plan, but it was not clear what rule applied nor what path the Forest Service should take to address the flaws identified by the court. Much of that uncertainty has settled and we feel reasonably confident in providing you this update.

Nationally, the Forest Service has filed a notice to prepare an environmental impact statement to address the flaws identified by the court in the 2005 Rule process. The Arizona Forests have all continued to work on several tasks associated with Plan revision in a manner consistent with the National Forest Management Act and neutral with respect to the various planning rules that might apply. The Kaibab NF will continue to work on those over the next several months to identify needs for change to the Plan. We intend to do much of this with those of you who would like to help us.

The work many of you helped us with previous to the court ruling is not lost. Nearly all of it will continue to be used in identifying the needs for change. Specifically:

- Public participatory processes will resume. Although the 2005 Rule was the only one that required collaboration, none of the others prohibited it, and we think it's a good idea.
- We will continue using a guideline about considering the best science in our processes.
- We will continue to aim for a more strategic, less prescriptive Plan as an end product, with a primary focus upon desired conditions and objectives to make progress toward the desired conditions.
- Sustainability analyses are continuing in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of NFMA. We are preparing a rough draft of the ecological sustainability report, incorporating information and public input for the two primary parts of this analysis – ecosystem diversity and species diversity. While we are not sure how species will eventually be addressed in the Plan, the information developed with your help is captured in a database that will serve as an invaluable reference, regardless of which process we use. We have finished a rough draft of our social and economic sustainability report, incorporating information and public input. Once these sustainability analyses have been reviewed internally, we will share them and engage in dialogue with our publics to identify the social and economic needs for change.



- Direction about the need for change to Special Area identification and management is substantially the same as before. We are incorporating public feedback into a draft needs for change and will bring that back to you before finalizing it.

Beginning in late September, we hope to resume public processes to continue this work, aiming toward completion of a comprehensive assessment of the needs to change the Plan this winter. As we move through the summer, we will be sending you specifics about meeting topics, times and places.

Note to e-mail recipients: If you received this letter by e-mail, we have a record of your e-mail address and will use this means to contact you in the future about Forest Plan Revision. If you prefer we send you paper mail instead, please reply to this message making that request.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Stuart M. Lovejoy (for)*  
MICHAEL R. WILLIAMS  
Forest Supervisor